

A very middle class baby who will secure the future of the royal family

Escrito por Administrator

Miércoles, 31 de Julio de 2013 21:05

<p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">So, we can stop holding our breath. The eagerly awaited arrival has at last taken place.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">After all those days on tenterhooks, the nation is about to meet a royal child who seems certain to change the face of the British monarchy for ever.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">Kate and William's son enters this world as a Royal Highness, destined one day to occupy the throne of this country.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">

</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">His mother's official title is Her Royal Highness Princess William, Duchess of Cambridge, Countess of Strathearn, Baroness Carrickfergus. But those grandiose ceremonial styles cannot disguise the fact there has never been a royal child quite like Kate's.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">For though William can trace his descent from a long line of monarchs, this baby boy's maternal grandparents, Carole and Michael Middleton, once worked for British Airways, and are now firmly and publicly in trade with their mail order company Party Pieces.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">Kate's ancestry on her father's side is Leeds-based woollen cloth merchants and manufacturers, while on her mother's side she is descended from working-class labourers and miners from Sunderland and County Durham. Carole herself was raised in a council flat.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal;">You have to go back almost 500 years to find a future English Queen Consort with comparable links to trade and the merchant classes. Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, great-grandfather of Henry VIII's second queen, Anne Boleyn, was a mercer (dealer in fabrics) and wool merchant before becoming Lord Mayor of London. </p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal;">But even this is not a true analogy with Catherine Middleton's background, for Anne was an aristocrat, and her maternal uncle was the Duke of Norfolk, one of the most powerful noblemen in the country.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial,

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Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal;">This new Cambridge prince will become the first British monarch with working-class and middle-class blood running through his veins.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal;">Monarchy these days is a precarious business, and increasingly hard to justify ♦ not only in terms of the funds taxpayers donate to the Crown, but in a wider world in which royal families seem ever more anachronistic.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">
</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♦</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">There are those who say maintaining the mystique of what was a sacred institution is the only way the House of Windsor can survive. They fear this magic cannot accommodate a former air hostess♦s daughter giving birth to a royal heir.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">Yet I believe the opposite is the case. We live in a world in which those with ambition and talent can move far more fluidly between classes, where money often speaks louder than titles, and where that unlikely sage John Prescott♦s famous adage ♦we are all middle class now♦ is increasingly true.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">This baby has arrived at a time of profound social change and evolution ♦ which is why I believe a royal child with middle-class antecedents can provide the social alchemy that will secure the future of the House of Windsor.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">Just this month, the House of Lords gave the final reading to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, a major amendment of British law now accepted ♦ with reluctance and some foreboding ♦ by the Church of England, of which William, and eventually his son, will be the nominal head.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">William and Kate, a modern couple, lived together quite openly for several years before their marriage, a sensible decision condoned by the Queen, which would have been seen as unthinkable less than a decade earlier.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">

</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">♦</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">This was after William♦s father, the Prince of Wales, had moved his divorced former mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles, into Clarence House, a situation that would have been equally unacceptable during the lifetime of Charles♦s traditionalist grandmother, the

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Queen Mother.

All this is evidence of a rapidly evolving monarchy, though one which has still provided a point of reassuring continuity.

Who would have suspected that the Queen, not regarded in the earlier years of her reign as one of the most flexible personalities, would have loosened her stays sufficiently to be seen pretending to jump out of a helicopter and parachute into the Olympic stadium with the latest James Bond, Daniel Craig?

And who can predict just how far this process of evolution will have travelled by the time the new royal prince reaches the throne? If the present Queen survives for another ten years, which she shows every sign of doing, Charles will come to the throne at 75, if not even older.

If he remains King for a further decade, William and Kate will both be in their 50s when they are crowned. Assuming they reign for another 25 years, their first-born could be around 45 before by the time he comes to the throne in the second half of this century.

By the 2050s, the world's surviving monarchies will inevitably be increasingly modest and informal. So, William and Kate's son is liable to rule over a slimmed-down Royal Family, with fewer official residences, less pomp, and greatly reduced expenditure.

With Kate as a mother and the generally down-to-earth William as father the new arrival will learn from his parents that motivation and discipline are at least as important as the observance of protocols.

Crucially, he will have the blood and genes of the Middletons, who are aspirational achievers, and self-made New Money. They are despite the comments of those who have sneered at them the acme of middle-class success, forged through energy, enterprise and sheer hard work.

Could there be a better model for our fledgling royal to learn what is important in life?

Thus it seems highly probable the latest addition to the House of Windsor will be less inhibited by stuffy convention than any royal child before. By the middle of this century, the choice of marriage partners or live-in companions, even for a future monarch, will be less restricted than ever.

The prince could

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marry someone entirely ♦ordinary♦, without even Kate♦s social advantages, thus completing the process she and her family have begun ♦ of making a once elitist institution finally appear more socially inclusive, and able to survive further into an uncertain future.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">The education of royal children is also likely to undergo a transformation. By the time this baby marries, it may no longer seem necessary or desirable to send a royal child to a privileged institution like Eton. The time may come when even inter-racial marriage within the Royal Family will seem no big deal.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">In every sense, the birth of Kate and William♦s son will usher in the dawn of a new and radical royal era. And yet I am convinced it will be an era entirely in tune with an ever more egalitarian nation. With Carole Middleton♦s grandson in the line of succession, what♦ rabble-rousing republican would dare say the monarchy has no future, or that it understands nothing of the people it is supposed to serve?</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">A report by the think-tank Future Foundation found that in the past four decades the number of Britons who say they are middle class has gone up from 30?per cent to 43?per cent ♦ a figure that will surely rise. What monarch in British history could claim he, or she, hailed from the same social class as half the populace?</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">
</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">This expansion of the middle classes has also been reflected recently in the nation♦s political life, with both parties vying for the centre ground to which Tony Blair so successfully staked a claim.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">We are no longer a nation that expects to have a toff at the top, as perhaps we did under Old Etonian premiers such as Harold Macmillan and Alec Douglas-Home. Poor old David Cameron has spent much of his time in Downing Street trying ♦ and often failing ♦ to sound like a man who understands the concerns of ordinary people.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">You might say the Prince of Wales ♦ accused last week of paying a lower tax rate than his servants ♦ has the same problem. With his army of staff and his demand for the best of everything, he has often been the target for sharp criticism that he is self-indulgent in the extreme.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">Which is why the birth of baby Cambridge ♦ who will surely develop more modest tastes ♦ should bring such hope to those who would see the monarchy flourish into the 22nd century.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">We should not forget that without the influence of his mother Diana, Prince William might not have chosen a girl with

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a background like Catherine Middleton. </p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">More than Charles ever did, Diana understood that her boys should mix with all classes in their formative years. That was symptomatic of a woman who did more to modernise the monarchy than any member of the Royal Family for a very long time.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">And yet even Diana was the daughter of an earl, the child of a courtier, and the product of generations of landed wealth and privilege.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">It is this new royal prince, descended from Yorkshire wool merchants and Durham miners and labourers, who truly belongs to the people.</p> <p style="margin: 0px; padding: 0px; min-height: 1px; color: #000000; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; font-size: 10px; line-height: normal; text-align: justify;">From the pit to the Palace in three generations? Surely it is the perfect fairytale for a nation that will grow more middle-class by the year.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">

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